



January 20, 2011

Ms. Francoise Carrier, Chairperson
Montgomery County Planning Board
8787 Georgia Avenue
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Carrier and Members of the Planning Board:

I share the concern of many area residents about sketch plans relating to the Mid-Pike Plaza, North Bethesda Gateway, and North Bethesda Market II. We believe that approval of these sketch plans should be delayed until the respective developments provide amenities described in the White Flint Sector Plan.

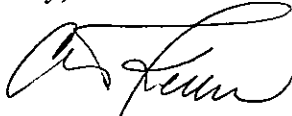
The Town of Garrett Park participated in the process leading to the White Flint Sector Plan. Although we continue to have concerns about traffic impacts, most Garrett Park residents are excited at the prospect of redevelopment of the hodge-podge of strip malls and parking lots that currently makes up White Flint. If the renewed, revitalized White Flint is to be successful, however, it must incorporate sufficient library space and community services to meet the needs of residents in these new developments, to avoid overcrowding of public facilities. Garrett Park and its residents have long been concerned that the infrastructure and amenities should keep pace with the development in the sector, if the promise of revitalization is to be realized.

Federal Realty's Mid-Pike Plaza is the second largest property in the sector. Federal is proposing a large redevelopment, including several office and residential towers, totaling almost 3 ½ million square feet. We ask that you require this property to offer amenity space appropriate to its scale. We would like to see the Federal plan include reserved space on the order of 50,000 to 60,000 square feet, facing the proposed civic green across Old Georgetown Road, for County use – whether as a library, community center, regional services center, or some mix of these uses. The uses can be defined later, as the County makes plans, but the space should be reserved now.

If the Planning Board does not include the entire space for the library, community center, and regional services center at Mid-Pike, the total amenity space should be split between the three sketch plans under discussion, but still reserved. Omitting these amenities at the beginning of the implementation of the White Flint sector plan will jeopardize their incorporation in a revitalized White Flint or, at a minimum, significantly delay them to the detriment of both the White Flint Sector and all nearby residents.

Please take the time to make sure that these sketch plans are done well. The future of our area depends on your thoughtful consideration now.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Keller", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Keller, Mayor